

[English]

### Target of Telecom

1132 DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state

(a) whether the attention of the Government have been drawn to the news-item captioned 'Telecom department not even halfway near target' appearing in the 'The Economic Times' dated 1 October, 1996;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) the target fixed for the current financial year;

(d) the number of telephone lines provided during the last six months;

(e) the reasons for lagging behind the target; and

(f) the steps taken by the Government to meet the fixed target?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) It is normal that achievements during the first two quarters of an year is comparatively less and it picks up during the third and fourth quarter. The achievement upto 31st October '96 is 29.83% of the annual target.

(c) The target fixed for the current financial year for providing telephone connctions is 24.5 lakhs.

(d) 6.299 lakh telephone lines were provided from 1.4.96 to 30.9.96.

(e) and (f) Most of the equipments reach the sites during the second and third quarters of the year.

Material supply is being watched and the progress in achievement is being monitored more closely. The overall target is likely to be achieved.

### Catering Facilities

1133 SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state

(a) the number of stations and pairs of trains having the catering facilities, State-wise;

(b) the number of stations having catering services provided by private contractors and Railway Department units, separately, State-wise;

(c) the number of new trains in which catering services have been introduced during 1995-96 and 1996-97 till date;

(d) the sales turnover of catering units during the above period;

(e) whether the Government propose to award the catering contracts to unemployed youths in the country particularly in Orissa, and

(f) if so, the details thereof;

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Catering facilities are available at 3152 stations and 133 pairs of trains. State-wise data is not maintained.

(b) Catering services are provided departmentally at 102 stations and at 3050 stations these are managed by private contractors.

(c) Catering services have been introduced on 15 pairs of trains during 1995-96 and on 4 pairs of trains on 1996-97.

(d) Sales turnover of departmental catering units during 1995-96 was Rs. 144.08 crores and during 1996-97 (upto August 1996) is Rs. 70.24 crores.

(e) Catering policy provides for award of catering contracts to reputed and professional caterers.

(f) Does not arise.

[Translation]

### Adequate Lodging Facilities to Foreign Tourists

1134 SHRI N. J. RATHWA : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state

(a) the steps taken up by the Union Government for providing adequate lodging facilities to foreign tourists in Gujarat;

(b) whether the Union Government have evaluated the arrivals of Foreign tourists in the current year; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA) :

(a) Sir, Construction of hotels is mainly a private sector activity. At present there are 38 hotels in the approved sector functioning in 15 cities of Gujarat totalling 1960 rooms and 38 approved hotel projects spread over 20 cities of Gujarat which on completion will add 1636 rooms.

To encourage investment in this Sector, the Government is extending various incentives and Tax concessions.

(b) and (c) The foreign tourist arrivals in India from January to October, 1996 were 17,73,930 with an increase of 7.6% over the corresponding period of preceding year.

### Rewa-Singrauli Railway Line

1135 SHRI SUKH LAL KUSHWAHA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state

(a) whether the Government propose to start construction work on Rewa-Singrauli rail line for which the survey has already been completed.

(b) if so, the expenditure likely to be incurred thereon; and

(c) the time by which the construction work is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) to (c). The Survey Report for new Broad Gauge rail line from Ashoknagar-Lalitpur-Satna-Khajuraho-Mahoba and Satna-Rewa-Sidhi-Singrauli (627 kms.), has recently been received. The results of the survey are under finalisation in consultation with the Zonal Railway. Further consideration of the project, in consultation with the Planning Commission, would be possible, once the results of the survey are finalised.

[English]

#### Rural Telecom Network

1136. DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the target fixed for providing rural telecom network during the Eighth Plan and the achievement as on date;

(b) the system being adopted to expedite telephone connection in the rural areas at least in every village/ panchayats; and

(c) the projection made for the Ninth Plan?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) Target in Eighth Plan is to provide 3.38 lakh villages with at least one public telephone by the end of Eighth Plan. The achievement as on 19.11.1996 is 158685 villages.

(b) Presently Analog Multi Access Rural Radio (MARR) System has been adopted to provide one telephone in each village. Other new technologies are also likely to come in near future.

(c) It is proposed to cover all the remaining villages in the Ninth Plan.

#### Daily running of Gondwana Express between Hazrat Nizamuddin and Bilaspur

1137. SHRIMATI CHHABILA ARVIND NETAM : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether requests have been received to run Gondwana Express daily between Hazrat Nizamuddin and Bilaspur; and

(b) if so, the time by which it is likely to start running daily on the above said route?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) At present there is no proposal for daily running of 2409/2410 Nizamuddin-Bilaspur Gondwana Express.

#### Travelling Concession to Scheduled Caste/ Scheduled Tribe Students

1138. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the SC/ST students are given travelling concession in second class and not in second class sleeper;

(b) if so, the reason therefor; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) to (c) Students, including Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe students, of educational institutions recognised by Ministry of Education, Government of India or the Education Department of concerned State Government are granted concession in Mail/Express fares of Sleeper Class in addition to Second Class. They can avail of this concession for travel by Sleeper Class for any distance.

[Translation]

#### Gottwald Crane

1139. SHRI BRAHAMANAND MANDAL : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether any deal has been finalised by the Government for the purchase of Gottwald Crane of 140 tonnes capacity with Germany; and

(b) if so, the terms and conditions thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) No, Sir. The tender for procurement of 140 tonnes Accident Relief Cranes is under finalisation.

(b) Does not arise.

[English]

#### Thiruvananthapuram as International Airport

1140. SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether inspite of being declared International Airport, the Thiruvananthapuram Airport lacks facilities of an International Airport;

(b) whether the Government have received any representation in this regard; and

(c) if so, the steps being taken to provide all facilities of an International Airport to Thiruvananthapuram Airport?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) No, Sir. Adequate facilities exist for the